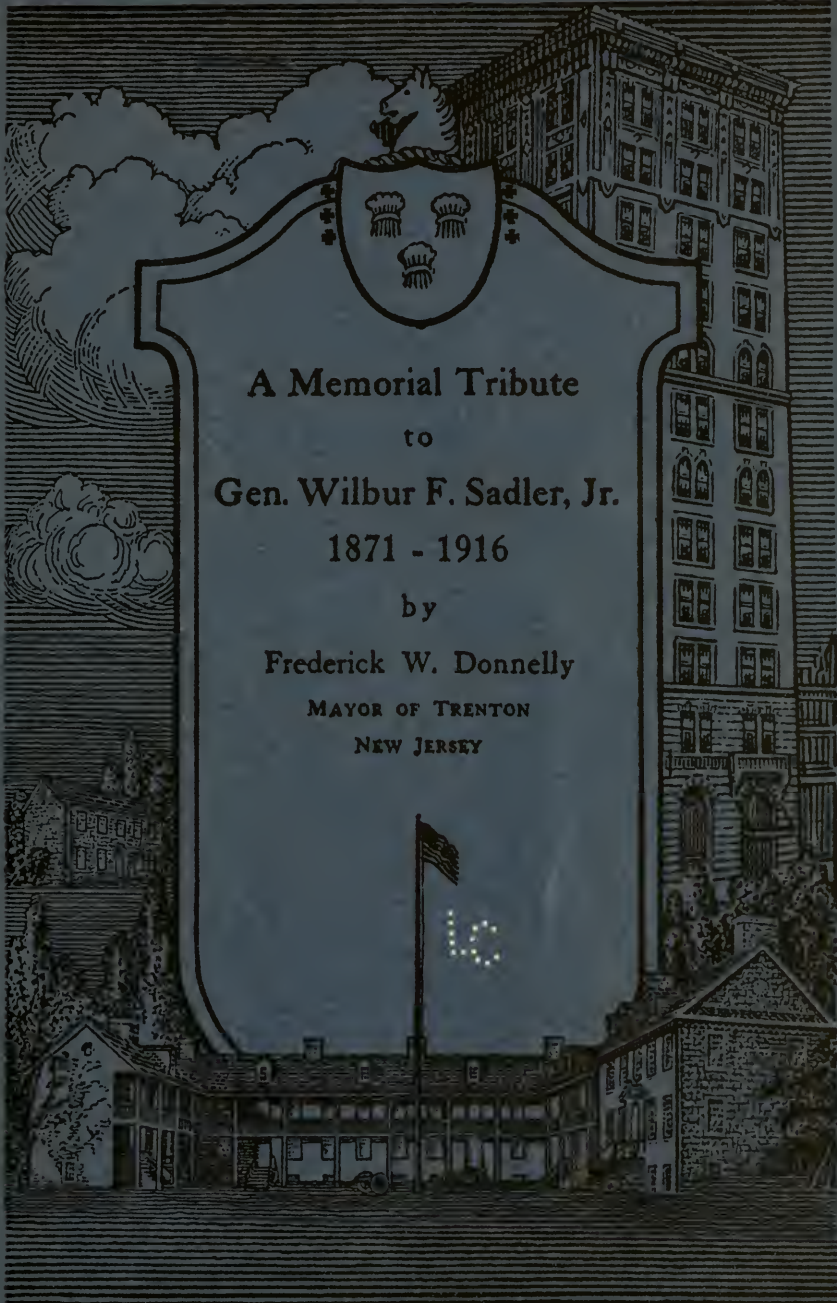


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A Memorial Tribute
to
Gen. Wilbur F. Sadler, Jr.
1871 - 1916
by
Frederick W. Donnelly
MAYOR OF TRENTON
NEW JERSEY

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WILBUR F. SADLER, JR.

By Transfer
AUG 20 1917

“HOW, THEN, SHALL WE MEASURE
THE LIFE OF A MAN?

IN DEEDS—NOT IN YEARS.

IN HEART THROBS—NOT IN CLOCK TICKS.

BY THE MEMORY HE LEAVES, AFTER PASS-
ING ON, OF NOBLE ACHIEVEMENT FOR THE
BENEFIT OF HIS FELLOWMEN.

BY SUCH PROCESS WE FIND THE LIFE OF

WILBUR F. SADLER, Jr.

TO HAVE BEEN THAT OF THE FULLEST MEAS-
URE OF A MAN.

HIS UNSELFISH PUBLIC-SPIRITED ACCOM-
PLISHMENTS ARE HIS BEST MONUMENT, MORE
LASTING AND MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN GENIUS
COULD FASHION FROM PUREST MARBLE.”

Memorial and Resolutions

A community strides to its destiny, with movement slow or fast, according as it is led by its big men. These latter blaze the way—clear obstacles from the path—press into dim uncharted regions with venturesome spirit and unshaken faith in order that to the community which they serve may be shown a clearly illumined road over which to pass to progress and to success. The quickening of Trenton's civic spirit within the last decade, and the conservation of her priceless historical heritages, are due in a very appreciable degree to the efforts of such a man,—a man of ideals and of prophetic vision, a man to whom it was given to construct with the upbuilding hand of the statesman, a man of heart and brain devoted to the community

weal,—General Wilbur Fisk Sadler,
Junior.

I do but speak the truth when I say that the citizens of Trenton could not have lost a more unselfish advocate and benefactor than he. To attest in my feeble way to that which he has achieved for the city of his adoption, and to cite his works that will endure through the years as evidences of his beneficent heart and of his exalted public spirit, is the object of this memorial tribute. I feel impelled by a sense of public duty to emphasize what have been his accomplishments in bettering the lot of his fellow-townsmen, and I would be much the ingrate were I not to add here my appreciation of his personal friendship, of his helpfulness and loyalty to me during the six years of my mayoralty. I cheerfully give witness that it was he whose advice and exhortation led me from quiet mercantile pursuits into the turmoil of city politics to work for the establishment of the Commission

Form of Government in this city; that it was his encouragement and aid that has sustained me in my efforts in behalf of Trenton's waterways and waterfront development and many other civic enterprises; and that it was due to him more than to anyone else among the city's private citizenship that Trenton has attained a new birth and life, and has left its old conservative moorings and prejudices to become a real city with modernity and advanced ideals stamped upon it.

That to me seems to be the most appropriate theme in discussing General Sadler's activities, namely, the effect of his thought upon the almost provincial Trenton which he encountered when he came here in 1898.

But let us first trace the beginnings of this interesting personality.

Son of an eminent jurist, college-bred, his family holding first rank in their home town of Carlisle, Pa., young Sadler, after his education at Dickinson College, went to work in a

machine shop for a year. That was the characteristic Sadler we afterward knew, plain—democratic—no frills—downright business. In 1893, he built 33 miles of street railways in Schuylkill County, Pa., which betoken brains, skill and nerve in a chap just turned twenty-two. Thereafter, until the year he came to Trenton, Sadler proved an adept in railroad construction and laid down a number of big lines in Pennsylvania.

He came to Trenton with, as he said oftentimes, "\$75 and a load of sand." It must have been character sand, the "sand" of a game man, and it lasted him a lifetime.

Trenton was still in the one-horse stage—cut off from car-line communication with the contiguous farming territory—when Sadler settled here to construct suburban railways. Forthwith he changed the town's business, the town's aspect and the town's habits of thought. With his construction of the Trenton, Princeton and Lawrence-

ville line, he connected the richest farming section and the most populous borough town of Mercer County with the city of Trenton—a stroke of good fortune for Trenton and its merchants.

He built the Yardley, Morrisville and Trenton Railway which tapped Bucks County and poured her trade and her commodities into the lap of Trenton.

He built the Philadelphia, Bristol and Trenton Railway which gave access to the section bordering on the lower Delaware, as well as uniting Trenton and Philadelphia by trolley. In short, Mr. Sadler as an individual promoter and constructor, led a network of trolley lines into Trenton, converted the conservative old city into a hub and mart of the territory within a 20-mile radius, forced Trenton out of its shell, and quickened business here to an extent chargeable to no other man, alive or dead. Creating Bigger Trenton: that was the feat of Wilbur F. Sadler, Junior, and if he had accomplished nothing else for this community, it

would entitle him to the undying gratitude of every citizen.

But he was soon to attain fresh laurels. In 1906 he was elected a director of the Broad Street National Bank, to which institution he brought a breadth of view and a capacity of initiative and enterprise that was destined to flower in countless ways, and which eventually placed the Broad Street National Bank in the forefront of the banking institutions of the state. Elected to its presidency, he suggested and supervised the construction of the handsome addition to the bank which is distinctively an esthetic asset of the city.

In 1908 Mr. Sadler was appointed a member of Governor Fort's staff, and in 1909 he was made Adjutant General of the State of New Jersey. In characteristic fashion he mastered the problems that beset the National Guard, and was responsible for the reorganization of the state's citizen soldiery, placing it in the van of mili-

tary usefulness and efficiency. And it was his herculean labors in behalf of the mobilization of the New Jersey troops for Mexican service that gave him his death blow. He fell—a martyr to duty—in service as glorious as if his end had come upon the battlefield.

General Sadler saw Trenton's needs and its possibilities with a clearer eye than most of his contemporaries. He lent his force and influence to the movement to establish Commission Government here, because he felt that under the Commission plan Trenton could better realize the promise of an effulgent civic destiny, in which business and labor would derive in just proportions their share of the common prosperity and advancement. He, more than any one else in this city, contributed to the rehabilitation of the Chamber of Commerce, for he visualized that organization as an arm, not only of business, but also of a civic spirit keen for community well-being, and for municipal betterments in all phases.

We come now to that achievement of his which stands forth as a monumental piece of civic patriotism: his successful endeavors to reclaim the waste lands in the rear of the State Capitol, resulting in the creation of Mahlon Stacy Park. I need not cite here the long weary hours he gave to bring his plan into being, nor the days of checks and discouragements which the light of success finally broke upon.

He gave to Trenton in that beautiful park a pledge and a token of his affection for the city of his adoption. In bringing Mahlon Stacy Park to actuality, he made this generation of Trentonians and the generations to come his debtors in gratitude. The restorations of the Masonic Temple and the Old Barracks, concomitant projects with the Stacy Park scheme, were his brain-children, conceived in the highest patriotism and born in the glow of his constructive genius. In the Masonic Temple, the Old Barracks and the Douglass House projects, General

Sadler has performed invaluable labor in preserving the priceless relics of Trenton's historic past, and posterity, more than the living, will appreciate how great the service, how farsighted, how admirable the man!

And I devoutly pray that the day be not far distant when the city of Trenton will express in substantial form the debt which it owes its distinguished departed son, General Wilbur Fisk Sadler, Junior.

Resolutions

Introduced by Mayor Frederick W. Donnelly
and adopted by

The Board of Commissioners of Trenton, N. J.

WHEREAS, in the death of General Wilbur F. Sadler, Jr., there has been removed from Trenton's most valued citizenship a personage whose achievements in behalf of his fellowmen in this state and this city have proclaimed him a most able leader in laudable public movements, and the possessor of statesmanlike judgment and vision in the disposition of the diversified problems of his official life; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of the city of Trenton have long marked and applauded in particular those activities of General Sadler which have directly benefited the city of Trenton and its inhabitants in bringing to successful fruition his project to give to them a river front redeemed to purposes of utility, recreation and enjoyment, by which project an unsightly waste tract was converted into the now beautiful Mahlon Stacy Park; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of the city of Trenton recognize that through the patient, untiring efforts of General Sadler much of Trenton's historical prestige, that had dwindled and suffered diminution, was revived and revitalized by General Sadler's work of restoring and rededicating the hallowed shrines of Trenton's historic fame; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of the city of Trenton fully recognize the loss that Trenton, in its commercial and its civic spheres, has suf-

ferred by the death of General Sadler, and do therefore desire to give perpetuity in proper form to the Board's assessment of his value as a citizen, and of his unselfish labors in the interests of the city of Trenton; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That these resolutions be spread upon the minutes of the Board of Commissioners, and that a copy be sent to the family of the deceased.

FRED'K W. DONNELLY,
EDWARD W. LEE,
WM. F. BURK,
J. R. FELL,
G. B. LaBARRE.

Adopted by the following vote: Messrs. Burk, Donnelly, President, Fell LaBarre, Lee—5.

Adopted December 1st, 1916.

LEON D. HIRSCH,
City Clerk.



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